New York Tribune

First to Last—the Truth: News—Editorials—Advertisements

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 1917

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Admiral Dewey

George Dewey held the post of Admiral of the United States Navy for nearly eighteen years. David G. Farragut, our first admiral, served in that grade only a little over four years. David D. Porter, his successor, served in it for more than twenty years.

But Dewey stood out among his naval contemporaries (in an official sense, at least) more than either Farragut or Porter did. While Farragut was admiral Porter was vice-admiral, and while Porter was admiral Rowan was vice-admiral. There have been no vice-admirals for the last eighteen years bridging the space between Dewey's grade and the naval grades below his.

This is not to say that Dewey was a Farragut, or even a Porter, in stature. But by force of circumstances all the *éclat* of the navy's achievements in the Spanish War clustered about him. He became, from the first weeks of that war, its great naval hero. He remained in the popular estimation its only hero—military or naval. The enthusiasm of the country was lavished on him less because of what he did—from a professional point of view—than because what he did had such a flavor of the unexpected and the romantic.

The distance of the scene of his achievement undoubtedly lent a certain enchantment. He won his First of May victory in a remote corner of the globe—in waters wholly unfamiliar to the average American. Overnight almost he broadened our national vision, forcing on the country with startling suddenness the thought of American expansion into the Orient. No naval battle could have been staged more effectively than was Dewey's incursion into Manila Bay and his destruction at one blow of Spanish power in the remote Philippine archipelago.

As a military feat history will certainly not compare it with Farragut's passage of the New Orleans forts, or his running of the Vicksburg batteries, or his forcing of Mobile Bay. Yet it had dramatic qualities which greatly appealed to the American imagination. And its political consequences were farreaching: we are, in fact, not yet in a position to measure them fairly.

Dewey suffered from that first outburst of adulation and over-heroization. It was not to his taste. He was a naval officer of the old style—of the Farragut school. He had fought as a midshipman under Farragut and had imbibed the traditions of the old navy. He lacked all the wiles of the politician. He was straightforward, unsuspecting, modest; he had an admirably stanch simplicity of character.

After his return from the Philippines unwise advisers caused him much embarrassment. The public resented his parting with the title to the house in Washington which had been purchased for him through popular subscription. When he was induced a little later to become a mildly receptive candidate for the Presidential nomination in 1900 and to give out a highly indiscreet statement dealing with his conceptions of the Presidential office, there was a sharp reaction from the earlier mood of hero-worship.

But this reaction only cleared away a popular misunderstanding. Admiral Dewey in politics would have been a tremendous failure. He had no aptitude for its arts. He was true to his type. He could never have accommodated himself to the conditions which a candidate for the Presidency must face. Happily for himself and for the country, his budding Presidential aspirations were quickly frosted. He had a life post as the ranking officer of the navy. He had a fine career to complete, and he wisely decided to let politics alone and complete it.

As admiral of the navy for more than seventeen years, he gave his time chiefly to service on the Navy General Board. That duty kept him in close touch with the construction of naval programmes and the general development of the fleet. He was a consistent advocate of adequate naval preparedness. His advocacy bore less fruit than it ought to have borne, for Congress and the country were still under the spell of the illusion of American geographical isolation (isolation being taken to imply safety). The public was still unawakened from the dream that arbitration treaties and other machinery of pacifism had banished the possibility of wars between great nations.

Admiral Dewey labored faithfully against adverse conditions to create an adequate fleet, to strengthen the personnel and to make the military direction of the navy firmer and more efficient. He was in much the same position as Lord Roberts was in preaching military preparedness to the people of Great Britain. For years his admonitions were little heeded either by Congress or the heads of the Navy Department. But he lived to see the wisdom of his neglected arguments and rejected building programmes vindicated. He kept his own record as a naval councillor straight and clear.

A highly characteristic action of the admiral was his disagreement with the majority of the naval board which heard the charges against Rear Admiral Winfield S. Schley. Those charges were based largely on enmities growing out of the lamentable Schley-Sampson feud. Admiral Dewey had always held aloof from cliques and factionalism in the navy. He had no sympathy with the intrigues which were so prevalent in the department prior to and during the Spanish war. He felt that Rear Admiral Schley was being pursued by factional animosity and that the reputation of the navy was being damaged by such proceedings.

He voted to acquit Schley, although in so doing he antagonized most of his naval associates. History, no doubt, will approve that vote. But partisan feeling in the navy ran high at that time, and what history might think received little consideration.

It was natural for Admiral Dewey to go counter to what he considered an unworthy agitation. Therein lay his strength of character. He was an upright, conscientious, courageous man, not afraid of unpopularity, if unpopularity should result from following his own convictions and doing what he felt to be along the line of duty.

The navy has lost, therefore, an admirable head—a head worthy of its best traditions. From the military critic's point of view the United States may have produced greater admirals, greater rear admirals and greater commodores than George Dewey. But few of the men who have risen to these grades have been superior to him in the essential qualities which go to make up the ideal naval officer.

Another German Raider

It is now nearly six weeks since it was made known by the British Admiralty that an armed and disguised vessel of mercantile type, supposed to be a German commerce destroyer, had been sighted in the North Atlantic. Repeated warnings were sent out by wireless, yet after a while, nothing further having been heard of her, it was too readily assumed in some quarters that the alarm was false.

Later information virtually confirms the original report and shows that an extraordinary amount of mischief has already been worked by the mysterious cruiser, supposing only one to be at large. It is officially announced in London that of ten British and French merchant vessels sunk and two captured in the last few weeks there is good reason to believe that all were victims of a single raider. Reports of further havoc come from Rio de Janeiro, and it may be that the losses already amount to a score of ships.

Very little is known of the raider. It is reported on doubtful authority that she is a protected cruiser, but more probably she is a converted merchant vessel, like the Moewe and the Greif. The enormous damage that may be done by such vessels in a short time has already been demonstrated. They are, in fact, a much more serious menace than submarines. The Moewe on her brief cruise destroyed or captured many valuable ships. The loss to Great Britain was estimated at fully $10,000,000, and the raider returned safely into port with nearly one hundred prisoners and about $250,000 in gold bars.

It is almost a year since the Moewe succeeded in gaining the Atlantic. No other German vessel excepting submarines succeeded in repeating the feat before this new raider, though it is highly probable that the attempt has often been made. Last February the Greif, disguised as a Norwegian tramp, contrived to get about as far as the Shetlands, when she was encountered by a British auxiliary cruiser; whereupon there ensued a duel in which both ships were sunk. Characteristically enough, the Germans hailed the event as a great naval victory. It is amazing that we have heard of no more successful evasions of the British patrol until now. A few cruisers at large in the Atlantic could do far more harm than all the submarines, and with greater profit to the Germans, if only they were fortunate enough to repeat the remarkable performance of the Moewe.

William De Morgan

Somewhere in his reminiscences Justin McCarthy told a later generation that it could never understand the feeling of expectancy and of joyous satisfaction which preceded and accompanied the publication of a new novel by Dickens in the good old Victorian days. It was an event of nation-wide importance. The Irish statesman wrote, and wrote with fervor, before one belated Victorian emerged from his life-long obscurity, to give to that younger generation an experience almost as interesting and pleasurable and memorable. William De Morgan gloried in his Dickensian touch; he cultivated it, and never wearied of praising his master.

"Joseph Vance" came at a moment when the modern movement in English and American fiction was in full swing. Realism was the word of the day; Russians and Frenchmen were our chosen models. We had discarded the Victorians. Their champions were old fogeys. And yet, that one book, voluminous, leisurely, discursive, Victorian in atmosphere as in method, revering the London and the characters and the caricatures of Dickens's own vision, sufficed to bring back even the sophisticated and the scoffers to an art which they had forsworn.

De Morgan, at sixty-five, became the author of the year. If he never quite succeeded in repeating his first great success, if he never drew another character that will live, as old Vance deserves to live, in the annals of English fiction, he never failed to give his admirers pleasurable moments of sentiment and humor. He loved his characters; he lived with them at the distance of many years; he had the gift of transferring himself back into the past. And so, at the beginning of the twentieth century, he added a page worth treasuring to the Victorian chapter in our literature.

It may be said of him, as it has been said of his master, that somebody is always reading him. A revival is laid away for him somewhere in the future. Perhaps his death may serve to bring it now. Certain it is that whoever takes up his earlier books will submit to a charm which, though confessedly borrowed, yet has all the spontaneity of an original mind and an original vision.

Ersatz Provender

Now that an official luncheon on the calory system—at 10 cents a head—has thrust itself into the public gaze, we may expect frequent imitators. No home is so happy but that a daring and economical housewife may attempt a meal of scalloped onions and peanuts or some parallel enormity. So far so good. Bills are high, and even a hungry husband may be glad to sacrifice something to reduce them. But let there be no pretence about such viands, we beg to urge. If you will economize, do so frankly and fairly, and don't serve your peanuts as sweetbreads or your beans and dried bread as chicken, as was done to our courageous squad of rookies the other day.

Here lies one great trouble with all our diet reformers. They don't say: "Here is an interesting dish; it's new stuff, cheap, wholesome and good eating." They say: "Here's a new dish that tastes almost as good as chicken and costs less." The long-suffering eater tries and fails, naturally. He looks for chicken and finds a sad imitation to blast his trusting faith. Vegetarians make the same blunder when they serve vegetable hash or pretend that a guileless banana is some relation to a calf. It was by dint of combining white beans and dried bread with sundry condiments that the cook of the dieting rookies achieved a "mock chicken" that tasted something like turkey. They were good beans, at that, everybody agreed. Most of the de-alcoholized beer manufacturers have made the same mistake, achieving a poor imitation of beer rather than a good drink.

Some of the responsibility doubtless lies with the unimaginative consumer. The manner in which scientific Germany is serving up Ersatz provisions—a substitute for coffee, for sausage, for what not—shows how widespread is the belief that human nature would rather be hoodwinked than frankly crossed in its habits. But we suspect that a little more courage and imagination on the part of the purveyors would work far better. The spiritual food furnished by our magazine editors gives a significant parallel. The courage to print new stuff is sadly lacking; rather than take the chance they serve Ersatz-O. Henry, Ersatz-Jack London, Ersatz-Edna Ferber, until the whole digestive tract is deranged and all fiction tastes like Harold Bell Wright.

The arts are one here. Whether you are stringing immortal words together at 10 cents a word or dreaming a new custard pie, the point is to have faith and do your own honest best and let who will put forth the just-as-good package.

Father Taylor

(From The Boston Transcript)

All modern evangelists, whether itinerant or not, should make a special study of G. P. A. Healy's portrait of Father Taylor, which has been acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts of this city, and see whether they cannot absorb from a contemplation of its rugged but sweet and gentle features some of the reserve and self-control which went with that great preacher's simple but matchless eloquence. Father Taylor, who was an orphan, of the Southern poor whites, and who went to sea as a young boy, where he was from the first accustomed to hear about the worst sort of language that can fall upon the human ear, preached nevertheless in an English so pure, so limpid, so poetic, that he had all the literary men and women of Boston at his feet. Of his preaching to the sailors, roustabouts and drunkards at the North End Bethel Emerson said: "What splendor, what richness, what sweetness, what cheer! He concillates and humanizes; he exhilarates and ennobles." Emerson also said of him: "God has found one harp of divine melody to ring and sigh sweet music amidst caves and cellars." And it is noteworthy that the lowest, the basest, the most ignorant, were spellbound by the simple and Biblical eloquence which so delighted the Boston scholars of an epoch that produced Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes and Whittier. Father Taylor was in many respects a model to all evangelists. He used his intimate knowledge of the poorest, most ignorant, most depraved of men to obtain an entrance into their minds and hearts, but he brought to them an ennobling influence with every word. This spirit speaks in his likeness still.

National Health and Military Training

(From The Philadelphia Inquirer)

In the mass of testimony which is being presented to the Senate committee on the question of universal military service there have been two points brought out which are worthy of the consideration of the American people. One was the proposition of Captain Mosely to provide for the annual training of a million boys of nineteen years of age. He favored thirty-six training stations in various parts of the country which would be permanent and result in a constant flow of well trained and healthful youth. The other point was made by Dr. Lucien Howe, of Buffalo, president of the American Medical Association. He told the committee that military training would go far toward correcting the alarming increase in physical defectives in the United States. He said, very frankly, that we were now physically a sub-standard nation, with the highest middle age death rate in the world.

The significant part of this testimony comes in the assertion that this unusual death rate is preventable. We make slight attempt to train ourselves physically. There is nothing that would go so far toward correcting it as universal military training for the young men of the nation. It is a well-known fact that a few years in the army and the navy have the tendency to make a man physically fit and to give him a constitution that is proof against most of the ordinary ills of life.

That our national health has been below par for a long while is well known to those who make a study of such matters, and that it may be improved wonderfully by the proposed plan of military training is the testimony of those who are in a position to know what they are talking about.

"NOT FAR FROM VERDUN"

The Message of France to an American Ambulance Worker at the Front

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I am permitted to send you for publication the inclosed very human letter from the front. It is written by one of the first rate Americans who are serving with the Harjes-Norton volunteer ambulance sections, which are under the American Red Cross.

If you like to state that anybody who wants to join the Volunteer Ambulance Service in France should apply to me, we shall be glad. ELIOT NORTON,
Director in America of American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps.

New York, Jan. 15, 1917.

Not far from Verdun,
December 28, 1916.

Dear Mama:

. . . . . .

Maybe you think that my head has been turned by the glory and glamour of this war, etc. Let me tell you that although there is a lot of that rot in the newspapers there is none in France. I have heard two bugles since I have been here, and both those were warnings to the people that a bomb-dropping aeroplane was overhead. There are no pretty drills and no dress other than service uniforms. Every one's single thought is to do his duty for France from the smallest kids to the oldest here.

Here is an example. I am living temporarily in a house where I sleep in a bed—wonder of wonders! We are "en repos," literally "in repose." Everybody expects that the army division to which we are attached will soon be sent into the hardest kind of fighting, and we are getting into the best condition possible for it. So we are quiet now, although still within hearing of the big guns

The owner of this house is a little stooped old French lady seventy-five years old. She has four sons now fighting and one dead. She also has five grandchildren fighting. She has sent her three granddaughters away so as to give the soldiers the comfort of the house. She not only gives her house, but does everything to make us comfortable, making beds, drying shoes, etc., doing laundry and building fires. I believe that all she gets to eat is what is given her. And when you ask her why all this—"C'est pour la patrie"—and dismisses it with a gesture.

And that is typical and not at all unusual "We must put Germany down where she will never again be a menace." That is not a bombastic slogan to hide a selfish policy. It is in the heart and soul of the French people There is no hatred of the Germans as in England. The prisoners here are treated exactly as the French poilu. They have the same food and do the same work. Lots of them are mending roads around here and are very happy. If there were more here there would be less French soldiers working on the roads, too, but as it is there are as many French soldiers as Germans working on the roads, and all working together and in perfect harmony. There is no hate here, but just the attitude that it is necessary to win the war for the good of France and the world. It is always "and the world."

I have found that I love France. It is wonderful. There are real sacrifices here and real patriotism. The Frenchman loves his country first, is proud of her next, and will do anything without thought of the cost for her. And the French women, too. Perhaps they have given more. Anyway they do not get the excitement. They are wonderful.

After I am through here I will be a better man for seeing the French. I will work harder than I ever did. I feel like a new man already, and I feel that I am doing something far, far better than what I ever did at home. Love to all. Please be careful of yourself. Your loving son,

Riverside's Beauty Value

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Riverside Park is a national asset. The care and preservation of Riverside Park is a trust for which the citizens of New York are answerable not only to the state but to the entire nation.

Riverside Park with two freight yards between Seventy-second Street and 145th Street would cease to be a thing of beauty or an inspiration to either citizens or visitors. Beauty also has its value, even a commercial value, since we are better understood when we speak in terms of value. A freight yard is not inspiring; a freight yard does not make for an ideal. And to progress we must have ideals. The very reason why most of us in America are in sympathy with the Allies in their struggle on the other side is because they are fighting for an ideal, for freedom against the materialism and soullessness of Germany. If we permit the beauty spots of the earth to be destroyed for commercial purposes we shall suffer untold losses, in that we shall lose the inspiration which only beautiful things can give us, in education, in health and in happiness.

If there were no alternative to the plans offered by the New York Central, then we might perforce have to bow our heads in acceptance of the slogan, "Business first." But there is an alternative to its plans, which would give the railroad what it needs in increased facilities and permit it to expand below Seventy-second Street, thus keeping Riverside Park and the waterfront intact for the future. Furthermore, the menace of the railroad being removed, the park could then be developed and improved as intended by those farseeing citizens who first conceived the idea of keeping this little strip of waterfront, out of the one hundred miles on Manhattan Island, alone sacred to its use as a park of unmatched beauty.

Even though the alternative plan would cost slightly more, yet for the sake of preserving our park it would be cheap at any price. As good citizens we cannot afford not to save Riverside Park.

ELIZABETH OGDEN WOOD.

New York, Jan. 9, 1917.

Riverside Park a Necessity

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: It is always assumed that the suit to keep the New York Central Railroad from broadening its tracks is merely an endeavor to preserve a beautiful view and some fine old trees for the property holders on the Drive. As a matter of fact Riverside Drive Park is not a luxury for the rich, but a necessity for the poor, and a breathing spot for all classes of men, women and children who walk a long way for the privilege of fresh air and a view.

In winter it is filled with children and babies. And in summer it is no exaggeration to say that it has saved the lives of thousands of these little ones, who are brought over from their stifling homes early in the morning by their mothers and spend the day playing and sleeping in the shade of the trees. The city does a great deal for children who are sick enough to be put into hospitals, but it would be less expensive and more to the point to preserve this little oasis for the children who can only be kept out of hospitals by having a place provided where they can enjoy fresh air and sunshine in safety.

The park is also a much needed resting place for invalids and old people, and a great boon to thousands of workers who have to remain in town all summer. G. F.

New York, Jan. 15, 1917.

AMERICAN TIN GODS

They Are Defended Against the Onslaughts of a New Englander—Our Debt to Republican France

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The letter of "A New Englander" in to-day's Tribune would hardly call for a serious answer had its writer not styled himself one of the "newer breed," by which I suppose he means one of the younger generation, and I need hardly add that this supposition is also warranted by the general contents of his letter. When the rising generation gets its knowledge of American institutions and constitutional law from exponents of socialism, whose object it is to create dissatisfaction and erroneous impressions, some effort should be made to set them in the right path, and so I ask The Tribune to let another New Englander (by birth and training) make a brief reply.

"A New Englander" professes to understand "American psychology," and, indeed, we might naturally expect some degree of proficiency along this line from one who has been permitted to sit so near the feet of the late Professor Münsterberg, of Harvard. But perhaps, after all, it was German and not "American psychology" that New Englander absorbed at Cambridge, as his letter in some respects suggests the German rather than the American point of view. There is something decidedly Teutonic in the manner in which he professes to have smashed our American "little tin gods" and one cherished illusion after another. It reminds one of the iconoclastic Huns and Vandals, Krupp guns and the assurance of the German mind.

One "little tin god," to wit, a sense of gratitude to France for aid in our Revolution, he has "shattered" (or professes that he has done so) in the following language: "The agency that helped us was not republican France, but the fleet and army of Louis XVI. So then our debt of gratitude was not to the French people, but to the ancien régime, their oppressors, who naturally helped us because they were fighting England themselves."

But not so fast, my young friend and fellow New Englander. We cannot so easily repudiate our debt of gratitude to "the French people." We cannot ignore those from whom we have begged assistance in our darkest hour of need and who generously responded to our cry for help. It becomes us to recall the fact that it was the intercession of Benjamin Franklin at the Court of Louis XVI which procured for us the assistance of French troops and ships.

My Yankee friend is wrong in saying that our debt of gratitude is to the ancien régime rather than to republican France. When Franklin went to France to plead the American cause he at once became the most courted man in Paris, the idol of all Frenchmen of republican sympathies, both among the nobility and the tiers état, and there were many among the higher orders who held republican views and assisted in bringing on the French Revolution which resulted in the first republic. These men often had the ear of Louis XVI, who was a well meaning monarch and frequently gave countenance to liberal movements. It is to these friends of democracy that we are indebted for the timely assistance from France, without which our freedom could hardly have been won in the eighteenth century, if at all. Our Yankee friend should not make so much of the fact that France and America had a common enemy in England. We should "not look a gift horse in the mouth," especially when we have solicited the gift.

Like my fellow New Englander, I can boast of forebears who took part in the American Revolution, and I can say further that it is a matter of record that many of them fought in the wars against the French and Indians of Canada under the ancien régime. The New England farmers who made war upon the British with old flintlocks that had seen service against the French and Indians of the old régime in Canada would indeed laugh if they could hear their Cambridge descendant protesting his "debt of gratitude to the ancien régime." No, my young friend, it is to the spirit of republican France that we should gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness.

There are many other points in the letter on which I should like to comment, but I am compelled to be brief. I cannot close, however, without commending our Yankee friend to a more careful study of American institutions. He seems to be more familiar with the history and constitution of New Zealand than with the history and constitution of his own country. He postulates rightly that "government consists of three branches—executive, legislative and judicial." He then proceeds to affirm that the President controls the Congress. As a resident of Massachusetts he should be familiar with that ringing passage in her bill of rights which declares that "in the government of this commonwealth the executive department shall never exercise the duties of the judicial and the legislative departments or either of them . . . to the end that it be a government of laws and not of men," a passage which Rufus Choate said he could never read without a thrill of sublimity. Our friend should know that in the Federal government the three great departments are likewise separate and independent.

How far, indeed, has the President actually controlled Congress? Aside from his veto, only so far as he has been able to impress his will upon it by his force of character and his powers of leadership. He has exercised even less power over the Supreme Court. Indeed, his power over the work of that tribunal has been negligible, our Socialist friends to the contrary notwithstanding. The Supreme Court has been in a position to snap its fingers in the face of the President ever since Chief Justice Marshall earned the undying enmity of President Jefferson by issuing a subpœna to compel the latter to appear as a witness in the trial of Aaron Burr for treason. The great Democratic President always contended that this procedure was an unwarranted invasion of the dignity of his office. Can "New Englander," who thinks the President "an autocrat," imagine a German court issuing a subpœna to William II, or an English chief justice commanding even George V to appear and testify?

One might think that even the rising generation could recall President Cleveland's historic struggle with the Senate to prevent the abridgment of the powers of his office. But those who have forgotten this should at least be able to recall how the Senate recently held up President Wilson's appointment of Louis Brandeis to the Supreme Court. Our political history is replete with such instances, which show that the President is not the autocrat which "New Englander" says he is. The imaginary spectacle of an Allan Benson, as a Socialist President, loading the Supreme Court with justices to do his bidding as the Court of Star Chamber registered the decrees of the Stuart monarchs is an amusing piece of nonsense.

Americans whenever they have tried to do so have been able to impress their will upon the Executive to a reasonable extent. President Wilson, "with his ear to the ground," has taken the recent election as an indorsement of his policies, however bitterly a minority may condemn some of them. As a rule, our Presidents have been followers, not makers, of public opinion.

Brooklyn, Jan. 11, 1917. F. C. BILLINGS.

PORK DEFENDED

Ex-Governor Sulzer's ex-Secretary Thinks the Scandal Limited

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Since the establishment of the federal income tax, more than ever before, I hear protests and criticisms of the annual appropriation bills passed by the Congress. No doubt these bills are larger than they ought to be. Some items should be stricken out, others should be reduced, because extravagantly large.

But on the whole I have little sympathy with the "pork barrel" outcries which emanate chiefly from newspapers whose sympathies and interests are with the great accumulators of wealth rather than with the common people.

The "pork barrel" cry comes largely from public service corporations and from those who have their money invested in these corporations; it comes from trusts and monopolies, and from those who have their money invested in trusts and monopolies. It is born of a desire to prevent the expansion of the functions of government into fields where the result will be the destruction, or the curbing, of trusts and monopolies.

It is born of a desire to prevent the people from doing for themselves, at cost, certain things which corporations are now doing for the public and amassing enormous fortunes thereby.

The wisdom of government ownership and control of the business of transmitting our mails is not questioned by anybody. But there was powerful opposition to the postal savings banks and the parcel post. Both have now demonstrated their usefulness. The wisdom of their establishment is plain to almost every impartial and unprejudiced person.

The development and extension of the postal savings banks and the parcel post make it more and more appropriate that the government shall own the buildings in which are located the larger postoffices. True economy demands government ownership of these buildings. When buildings privately owned are rented the rentals are usually very liberal. The facilities are usually inferior and inadequate.

Yet the "pork barrel" outcry is heard concerning a large proportion of appropriations for Federal buildings. "The New York Times" recently published an editorial criticising such appropriations under the caption, "The Public Buildings Scandal." There are conditions more scandalous in connection with the rental of buildings privately owned than there are in connection with appropriations for Federal buildings.

It was not scandalous "pork barrel" legislation which provided funds for Batavia's new Federal building. It was not "pork barrel" legislation which recently appropriated money for a Federal building at Bowling Green, Ky., the home of Speaker Champ Clark, although "The New York Times" tries to make out that it was.

The greed and avarice of corporations enjoying special privileges is, to a great extent, at the base of the "pork barrel" outcries and the talk about public building scandals. CHESTER C. PLATT.

Batavia, N. Y., Jan. 13, 1917.

The Dog Nuisance

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: There was an item of great interest in your paper January 11 concerning the dog nuisance in apartment houses, which I trust you will not drop. Mrs. Julius M. Cohn ought to have your support and the support of all decent people to rid the city of the terrible dog nuisance, which, as all intelligent people know, is a menace to health.

The Board of Health is remiss in its duty if it doesn't take some notice of the condition of buildings desecrated by the filthy dog. A DAILY READER.

New York, Jan. 15, 1917.

THE SPIRIT OF 1776 IN GERMANY

The Teutonic Effort to Escape from the Encircling Policy of England

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Your editorial in this morning's Tribune, "The Entente Answer," if read between the lines shows that you are not sanguine of an Allied victory in the Great War. Yet you rejoice that this foolish war will go on, knowing that the ultimate outcome will not be more favorable for England, et al., than it is at present. Indeed, it may even be much worse for them one year hence.

My favorite newspaper is The Tribune and will continue so to be no matter how much I may disagree with it as to the causes and the consequences of the war. Your Christmas Day editorial, "The American Point of View," was a gem.

Therein The Tribune spoke in ringing tones like a true American and warned England and her allies that the United States was not pro-Ally. This is the exact truth and no amount of special pleading, hypocrisy or chicanery will fool the American people in this matter. The great bulk of Americans have only the greatest admiration for the Germans in standing off a world in arms, and perceive that jealousy is at the base of the quarrel.

Two great comparisons or parallels have been used in discussing the present military situation in Europe by those who hope for an Entente victory. They are Napoleon's campaign in 1812, and our own Southern Confederacy in 1864. The first can be disposed of by stating that Napoleon was a conqueror pure and simple, and was foredoomed to ultimate defeat. The second case was a civil war in which the anachronism of human slavery had about as much chance of surviving as a snowball in Arizona.

A better parallel for this war would be the American Revolution, in which a few colonies achieved their independence against tremendous odds (with the help of noble France), because morally they were right. The Germans will also gain their independence from the encircling policy of England, and will be free economically in the future. The spirit of 1776 animates every German breast today, as shown by their numerous brilliant achievements on land and sea.

W. T. OSBORN.

Newark, N. J., Jan. 13, 1917.

How Long?

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The carol of peace has receded, for a while at least, from every one's thoughts, and the mind can now only dwell upon what is going to happen on the battlefield in the forthcoming year. What most people have asked themselves with regard to the peace proposals is how Germany would have received them if she had been besieging London. Perhaps not so well as we have done, judging from her courtesy to neutrals when they have seemed to act in a manner inimical to her interests. Germany has gone right on, disdainful of neutral opinion. England has not followed this example, nor can one believe that she will ever do so.

Neutrals, apparently forgetting all natural obstacles, ask how long is this terrible war to last. Is this an opportune question, put to the Allies when they are in their full striking power? Let it come when the blow now preparing has been struck.

It is only those who respect Germany for her military efficiency that can sympathize with her in defeat. Otherwise, the choice lies between a power that has broken every civilized code and which would continue to break them if victorious and nations that ask no more than they should have the constant shadow of military tyranny removed and restore to the weak the freedom they have lost.

C. KING.

Stratton, N. Cornwall, England, Dec. 26, 1916.

THE HEALTH INSURANCE BILL

Medical and Surgical Care of Workmen Provided For in Proposed Law

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The health insurance bill as introduced in the New York Legislature on January 15 by Senator Ogden L. Mills will provide protection for the worker who is sick just as in this state workmen's compensation laws provide care for the worker who is injured.

Statistics show that about 6 per cent of workers are injured each year, and that six or seven times as many are incapacitated by acute illness.

The bill, as contemplated, furnishes two-thirds of the wages during illness, medical care to the working man or woman during this time, maternity benefits for women, and funeral benefits when necessary.

Medical care under all circumstances and surgical care for all accidents not at present under the compensation laws are furnished, also the care by specialists, dental care to stop the enormous number of infections produced by bad teeth, and a generous allowance of medical and surgical appliances. This care will not only stop serious illness by arresting many incipient cases of disease in their early stages, but will diminish the length of time that the workers are sick, because it will furnish adequate care to every case of illness.

The medical organization outlined in the bill is so linked with the state and local health departments that further development of preventive medicine and sanitation is assured. The medical provisions of the bill have been worked out through a long series of conferences between committees of medical men and social insurance experts, and have been indorsed by the council of the Medical Society of the State of New York as safeguarding the public interest, the public health and the welfare of the medical profession. The employer under this law will have healthier workmen, and the employe will have safeguarded his greatest economic asset—that of daily good health.

ALEXANDER LAMBERT,
Chairman of the Social Insurance Committee of the American Medical Association.

New York, Jan. 15, 1917.

"Wait and See" in French

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Turning "wait and see" into really good French is not so easy as it sounds, although many people with a dollar dictionary and a nodding acquaintance with a Frenchman will no doubt try it, to their entire satisfaction.

"Qui vivra verra" ("he who lives long enough will see") is undoubtedly what a French minister would have said had he had to answer instead of Mr. Asquith. The French like general, impersonal expressions. They always avoid the use of "you" and "I." It may be modesty; it may be the mathematical mind which prefers to turn the individual example into the general rule—a kind of categorical imperative applied to speech.

"Attendez et vous verrez" is good French, but slightly too personal and familiar. A father might say it to his children; not a Prime Minister to a Deputy, whom it would offend.

"Attendez voir," quoted by your correspondent, is still more familiar and does not quite mean "wait and see." It implies a quickly forthcoming answer. A man who is just about to get the information desired over the 'phone might say "attendez voir." A man who was about to make a little sum in arithmetic, to verify a statement of his which has been challenged, would say the same thing. It really means "just a minute" or "let me think a minute" or "wait a bit."

As my opinion will be challenged and doubted, I may say I am of Anglo-French birth, that I have spent half my life in France and the other half in England, except for the years spent in this country, and that I have been a journalist and a lecturer both in France and in England.

F. D. HUGON.

Belmar, N. J., Jan. 15, 1917.

An Obvious Calculation

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: No wonder Mr. Chidsey, of Pascagoula, fails to solve his problem in differential calculus. Let me restate the problem as given in his letter in this morning's Tribune: "If the nearest fixed star is one billion of miles away, and it takes an express train, running thirty miles an hour, ten days to go from New York City to San Francisco, * (note the asterisk) how long will it take Woodrow Wilson to solve the Mexican problem?"

Now, if Mr. Chidsey will refer to the book from which the problem was taken, he will find that he turned a page at the point marked with the asterisk. Nay, more; he will find, if he takes off his glasses and polishes them well, that two pages are stuck together and he turned them as one. Separating the adherent pages he will there see that his set of astronomo-railway premises are connected with quite another problem, and that at the bottom of the facing page are the premises belonging with his Mexican problem.

He will read: "If a frog, at the bottom of a well fourteen feet deep, desiring to escape, ascends one foot each day and falls back two feet each night (here the page turns), how long will it take Woodrow Wilson to settle the Mexican problem?"

Never: Q. E. D. The answer is obvious, but Mr. Chidsey asked for it.

SHERLOC KOMES.

New Rochelle, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1917.

The Discontinuance of a Plan

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: On December 30 a letter appeared in The Tribune signed by me offering under certain conditions to manage and finance a movement to obtain a million signatures to an address of sympathy to Great Britain, France and their allies.

It has been decided not to carry out this plan; therefore, to prevent a misconstruction being placed on its discontinuance, I wish to state that the reason the plan has been given up is that word has been received from an Allied source, which it is impossible to disregard, that such an address would not be received with entire favor.

I do not regret having made the proposition, as the answers, both in tone and number, have been so gratifying as to leave no doubt that at least a million signatures could easily have been obtained. A. E. CORTIS.

New York, Jan. 16, 1917.

Why the Allies Cannot Bargain

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The article "Why the Allies Cannot Bargain for Peace," by Louis Tracy, in today's Tribune, is the best contribution to American consumption that has been made to the literature of the war. If copies of it could be sent to every American voter it would be more effective than any other propaganda spoken or written. And copies of it should be sent by registered mail without delay to President Wilson, Secretary Lansing and to "Gumshoe Bill" Stone, of Missouri, who appears to be President Wilson's principal Congressional adviser on European war matters. LAWRENCE GODKIN.

New York, Jan. 14, 1917.